Christ's Voice
TO
SINNERS:
OR,
Christ waiting at the Door of the Sinner's Heart for Entrance.

Wherein is ſhewn from Scripture how wonderful deſirous the Lord Jeſus is to get into every poor Sinner's Heart.

With many Motives to perſwade every poor Sinner to open the Door of their Hearts to the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

As alſo ſeveral true Characters of a Real Sound Chriſtian, and the marks of a Hypocrite or falſe Profeſſor, ſhewing how far a Profeſſor may go, and yet be but almoſt a Chriſtian.

Being of Excellent Uſe to all thoſe that deſire to know how the Caſe ſtands between them and their Souls,

Rev. 3. 20. *Behold I ſtand at the Door and Knock, If any Man hear my Voice and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will Sup with him, and he with me.*

John 10. V. 27.

My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

By *T. O.* D. D.

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Chriſt's Voice
TO
SINNERS, &c.

Rev. 3. 20.

Behold, I ſtand at the Door and knock, if any man hear my Voice and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will Sup with him, and he with me.

THis Text is part of the Epiſtle written to the Church of *Laodicea*, who was at this time in a very ſad Condition, lull'd aſleep in the Cradle of ſelf-Confidence; In which Epiſtle we have theſe parts:

1. The Inscription shewing from, and to whom it was written: to *Laodicea*; with a Description of him that sent it. *v.* 14.

2. We have the Body of the Epistle in which are these parts.

1. We have a Disease discovered.

2. A Remedy prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ to poor secure Sinners, and Professors; *Behold I stand at the Door*, &c. first we have in it a note of Attention, Behold; sometimes it is used as a note of Admiration.

The Observations are these.

1. Christ is but at the Door of many Professors and Sinners heart: *I stand at the Door*, &c.

2. Christ stands at the Door of many a poor Soul, willing and ready to come in upon their opening to him: *I stand at the Door*, &c.

Christ doth not only stand at the Door of a poor Sinners heart, but he knocks: *I stand at the Door and knock*, &c.

4. Christ will not refuse to enter the vilest and most unworthy heart that opens to him: *If any man hear my Voice, and open to me*, &c.

5. Poor

5. Poor Sinners muſt hear Chriſt's Voice, before they can open unto him: *If any man hear my Voice, and open unto me*, &c.

6. Some Souls hear Chriſt that do not open unto Chriſt: *If any man hear my Voice and open unto me*, &c.

7. Chriſt will be entring where Souls are opening: *I will come in to him*, &c.

8. Chriſt will keep up a ſweet Communion with all thoſe Souls that open unto him: *I will ſup with him*, &c.

All Souls that open to Chriſt keep a ſweet Communion with him alſo: *And he with me*, &c,

1. Chriſt is but at the Door of many *Laodiceans*, Profeſſors and Sinners hearts, Chriſt doth but ſtand at their Door, becauſe their unbelief hath boulted the Door againſt Chriſt: how is Chriſt ſaid to come into a Soul or dwell in a Soul. The Apoſtle anſwers this querie, by that Prayer for the *Epheſians*, that Chriſt may dwell in the hearts by Faith, unbelief leaves no room in the Soul for Chriſt, *Epheſians*, 3. 17. O Sinner while thou art in thine unbelieving State, Chriſt is but at the Door though thou mayſt think he is in the houſe, and in the heart: he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believes in him ſhould have everlaſting

Life, *John* 3. 16. Oh when the Soul is under the Exercise of Faith, it sets all wide open to Christ, Crying, come in thou blessed of the Lord why standest thou without.

2. Many poor Souls, Christ is but at their Doors, they have let in some of his Attendants and they think because of this the King of Glory is entered in. Oh how many poor Souls wofully miscarry upon this point, and eternally perish upon this mistake: you have let in family Duty, religious Performances, and in that you have done so you have done well, but these may be let into the house, and yet the King of Glory kept still at the Door. Did not you set upon them before your closure with Christ? nay do you not keep them up, and look not at the presence and injoyment of God in them? now it is the presence of the King that makes the Court, did not the Pharisees do so, and yet strangers to Christ, nay Enemies to him? did not the Jews do so, when their hands were full of Blood? Oh mistake not your Souls in these as the *Laodiceans* did. You may account your family-Duties your Riches, and yet be poor beggaly Souls in point of Faith; Retinue should follow the King, O let Christ and his Train go together.

3. Christ is at the Door of many a Professor

feſſor and Sinner: becauſe they retain ſome ſtrangers, ſome Enemies to Chriſt: he will not come in where he ſees ſtrangers, I mean ſome beloved ſin. *Jer.* 2. 25. It was a ſad ſaying of *Iſrael*, Strangers have I loved, and after them will I go: Sinners look to your hearts, ſee that you entertain no beloved Luſt: If you do, you cannot entertain your beloved Lord: what can you find in your hearts, your baſe Luſt ſhould be preferred before your bleſſed Lord? will you thus requite the Lord, fooliſh people and unwiſe?

4. Chriſt is at the Door of many a Profeſſor and Sinner: becauſe they have not been humbled under the ſenſe of Sin, *Iſa* 57. 15. but with him ſays God will I dwell, that is of an humble and contrite heart, to revive it: he takes not up a ſtand at the Door, but takes his dwelling in the houſe of ſuch a Soul. Poor Sinner never wonder at Chriſt being at the Door, If thou never ſaweſt thy need of him to give him an Invitation in.

5. Chriſt is only at the Door of ſome Profeſſors and Sinners, becauſe their Door-poſts have not the ſprinklings of the Paſcal Lamb upon them, now he comes; not into the Soul, but he ſprinkles his Blood upon it firſt, and then the deſtroyer was to paſs over.

Christ takes possession by sprinkling his Blood upon the Soul: O this Soul is mine, I have died for it: If thou hast not felt in some measure this Blood, I am afraid that Christ is but at the Door: O how speedily doth the Soul open to Christ, when the Blood of Christ cleanses the heart, O sinners get this Blood upon your Door-posts.

Application.

Is it so that Christ stands at the Door of many Professors and Sinners? then, 1. It is of Information to Professors, *Laodiceans*, 2. To prophane Sinners.

1. To formal professing *Laodiceans*; it shews the sad condition of such poor Souls who think Christ is housed in their hearts, and he is got no further than the Door, they think they are supping with Christ, and all this while he and they are meer Strangers, no familiar acquaintance betwixt them, they let him stand without as one neglected and slighted, while others are taken in: If you ask wherein doth the misery of a formal *Laodicean* lie, at whose Door Christ stands and can have no Entrance, I shall shew briefly.

1. Such

1. Such poor Souls profess under a delusion, which is a woful misery: this poor Church was under a sad Delusion for all their Profession: Oh what self-flattery was found in the skirts of *Laodicea*, and is it not to be found too too much amongst us, can there be a sadder judgment upon a Person, or Church, or Family, than to be given to a deceived heart, to have a better opinion of themselves, than Christ hath: is it not a piece of wrath from God to be given up to a Delusion, nay, to a strong Delusion to believe a lie, *Rev.* 22. they say they are Apostles, but are not, but thou hast found them Liars: O consider I pray how dismal this will be to your deluded Souls, O what a Soul confounding mistake will it be to drop into Hell, when thou lookest for Heaven!

2. Such a Soul under a formal Profession is harder to convince of his sad and secure condition, than open prophane Sinners: therefore our Lord did thunder out such dreadful Woes against the Pharisees, who were like the *Laodiceans* full and whole Souls, and were conceited they stood in need of nothing; one would have thought a few woes would have been wounding and convincing unto them, O but how hardly are such convinced of their

need

need of Christ, therefore our Lord preaches that Doctrine to them; *The whole need not the Physician but those that are sick, Mat* 9. 12. and at another time he tells them, Publicans and Harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before such: nay to convince such, God is put to his Oath: as I live saith the Lord I will not be enquired of by you; They thought they would enquire and sin, sin and pray, and then they thought all was well. O but says God, if you will not lay your sins aside you may as well lay your Duties aside: And is not this a great misery to think your selves Believers, when you are but Pharisees? you are in a worse condition than prophane Sinners.

3. Such souls under a formal Profession, that think Christ is in the house, when he stands but at the Door, shall be discovered; God will discover who is within, whether Christ or Corruption bear sway. Sinner God will find you out; as he found out the man that had not on the Wedding Garment, *Mat.* 22. 12. Oh what work will this make in thy Soul to be found to be none of the Lords? The foolish Virgins were discovered at last, and the foolish Builders, when the Floods beat and the rain fell, then the Foundation was discovered to be on the Sands.

4. Such

4. Such Children of the Kingdom who have made Chriſt ſtand without their hearts, he will make them ſtand without his hearing. Not every one that ſays Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but ſee their claim, they talk at a high rate, O but yet he never knew them, *Mat.* 7. *v.* 23.

5. Such as are under a form of Profeſſion, and under no real poſſeſſion of Chriſt, their condemnation will be greater than others, *Chorazins* Hell is an hotter Hell than *Sidons*: We read of ſome having their Portion with Hypocrites and unbelievers, Hypocrites ſays one are the free-holders of Hell, O what a piece of miſery will it be to periſh under ſo ſmooth a Profeſſion.

The ſecond branch of the Information is to ſhew us the miſery of Sinners, at whoſe Door Chriſt ſtands, and cannot get Entrance?

1. Such a Souls miſery lieth in this, its periſhing will be wilful and inexcuſable; thou art inexcuſable, O man, as the Apoſtle ſaith, thy Deſtruction is of thy ſelf: O poor Soul thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf: *O Iſrael*, did not Chriſt cry unto thee, behold I ſtand at the Door and knock, did he not cry why wilt thou dye? If thou wilt open me to I will come in and ſup with thee: O ſad condition,

is

is Christ calling thus upon thy poor perishing Soul, O will not thy poor Soul stand speechless before the Lord in the Great Day? when the Judge will say to the poor condemned prisoner, what sayst thou for thy self, that sentence of Death, yea eternal Death should not be pronounced against thee? O will not thy silence give a doleful consent to the reading of thy righteous sentence, to be cast for ever out of his presence?

2. Such Souls that only have Christ stand at their Doors, their misery lies in this. If he comes not in himself none of his Benefits come in; If Christ be not yours sinners, what is his will never be yours: how many of us love him rather for what he brings than what he is; I tell you my beloved, it is the person of Christ that is to be the object of our Faith and Love.

1 There is no room for Adoption, but by taking Christ, receiving Christ. To as many as received him he gave power to become the Sons of God, we are all the Children of God through Faith in Christ.

2. There's no room for Justification, but by taking Christ: *we are justified by Faith, Rom.* 5. 1.

3. No

3. No room for Union, but by taking Christ: *I will come in to him, &c.*

4. No room for Communion: *I will Sup with him.*

5. No room for Acceptance; we have access with confidence through the Faith of him.

Oh sad case! to be stript of all these at once: by Christ standing at the Door and the sinner refusing to give him entrance.

3. The misery of a sinner at whose Door Christ stands, is, such a Soul is a dead Soul: he that hath the Son hath Life.

4. A Soul that hath Christ standing but at the Door, his misery will appear in Christ departing; Christ will not always wait, and when he goeth away all that will do thy soul good goeth with him; the Lord Jesus when he departeth marketh the Door: and then wo be to that Soul when the destroying Angel cometh: Sinner know you may weary God, as well as Man; you have wearied man, and will you weary God also? *Isa* 7. 13. O think what will become of your Souls: If God say once to you, as he did to them, *Hos.* 6. I will return to my place, in Allusion to a Judge that is going off a Bench: O then the Prisoner cries nightily for Mercy: O poor Souls what and if the Lord should go off

off the Mercy-seat before you be reconciled to him? O cry for pardon before he go.

But I must hasten to the second Use of the Doctrine.

If Christ stands at the Door of many Professors and Sinners,

Then it is a word of Exortation to all, both Professors and Sinners to let Christ in, O let us give the Lord Jesus house-room and heart-room: shall Christ come and beg room and you deny him? we would not do thus with a friend, nay not with a stranger, let him stand at the Door hour after hour; and shall we deal thus with Christ? nay, who hath stood year after year, as he said, *Three years have I come seeking Fruit on this Figtree, and found none*, *Luk.* 13. 7, 8. so may he say, many years have I stood, waited and knockt and called for Entrance, but could find none, none answered or opened to me: O how sad is this that the Lord Jesus should be thus dealt withal?

Sinners I would to God I could perswade you this day to open to Christ; and to press you to it, I shall lay down several Motives.

1. Let us open to Christ, both Professors and Sinners, and let him in at the door before he departeth; you know standing is a wea-

wearyſom poſture to us, but not ſo it ſeems to Chriſt: we read of the Lord Jeſus, he ſtood at the Spouſes door, until his Locks were fill'd with the Dews of the night; O the wonderful patience of Chriſt, O admire his long-ſuffering; he might have march'd, If you and I had not opened unto him immediately; Jeſus Chriſt hath ſtood many a year at thy door, and ſaid as once to *Jeruſalem*: *O Jeruſalem*, when wilt thou be made clean, when ſhall it once be? Sinner how can you think he will ſtand any longer, who hath ſtood ſo long already, do not weary him, ſinner, but now open to him.

Second Motive.

To open to him, he will not ſtand long: O how ſhould this awaken drouſie Profeſſors and dead Sinners? what and if this ſhould be the laſt call, the laſt knock that ever thou ſhouldeſt have, if after this ordinance, the Seal of a hard heart ſhould be clapt upon thee, if thy Door after this day, be not only ſhut, but ſealed; what a ſad condition were then thy poor ſoul in? well thou knoweſt not but thy ſpiritual Judgment is at the Door, my ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man: what and if Chriſt ſhould ſay now at the cloſe of this Exerciſe, let them alone: Profeſſors and ſinners you that have not opened to Chriſt, this day

is fast approaching upon you, when he will say to you, as to *Jerusalem*, when he wept over it, *O Jerusalem hadst thou known in this thy day*, &c. *Luk.* 19. 40, 41, 42. you had a day in which Christ stood at your Doors, and wooed your poor Souls, to let him in, he called upon you to let him in, nay begged it at your hands: but now it is hid from your Eyes: poor sinners consider this, be instructed *O Jerusalem*: (be instructed *O England, Least my Soul depart from thee, and I leave thee desolate, Jer.* 6. 8.

Third Motive,

To open to Christ. He calls to be let in, and complains he is shut out; O what sweet calls were they that he gave the Spouse when he called her to open to him; open unto me thy Husband, unto me thy Lord, 2. my Sister what will you let Relations be shut out? 3. my Love, now he treats her above a Sister, as a Spouse, (my Dove) 5. undefiled one, O who could stand out against such a call?

Fourth Motive,

To open to Christ. Christ standing at your Door will aggravate your misery when you are shut out of Glory: If Christ had not waited on you so long, stood so long, as he said, If I had not come to have spoken unto you, you had not had sin: but his standing at the Door waiting for Entrance, and your denial

denial of him will be an aggravation to you, when you are ſhut out of Heaven, *Mat*, 8.12. the Children of the Kingdom ſhall be ſhut out. Oh how ſad will this be? he once ſtood at the Door of your hearts and you would not let him in, now the day is coming, you muſt ſtand at his Door, and he will not let you in: And none went in with the Marriage, but ſuch as were ready, and the Door was ſhut, and then what a diſmal cry was there, open, open unto us. O remember that word, the Aggravation lies there, *And you your ſelves thruſt out*, *Luk.* 13.25.

Fifth Motive,

To open to Chriſt, is the dignity of his perſon, I ſtand at the Door and knock, *He is the King of Glory*, *Philip.* 24. 7. *be you lift up you everlaſting Gates*, *and the King of Glory ſhall enter in*: O ſhall ſuch worms as we keep this glorious King at our Doors; we read a glorious deſcription of God, *Iſa*, 57.15. The high and lofty one that inhabits Eternity, and ſays, O poor ſoul, can this high and lofty one condeſcend ſo low, as to come into my heart: O he that inhabits Eternity, will he dwell in ſuch a wretched ſoul as mine? yea, that he will, alſo with him that is of an humble and contrite heart will I dwell (ſaith God) O now ſinner, Conſider who it is that ſtands at the Door: who would keep out ſuch a perſon as this?

Sixth Motive,

To open to Christ: Consider he hath opened his heart unto you, and all that he might get into your hearts, 1 *John* 18. *Isa.* 30. 21. Jesus Christ sets forth his heart before us; and shall we after all these plain discoveries of his heart in the Gospel keep him out of doors.

Seventh Motive,

To open unto Christ: Then the destroyer shall pass over, he will then sprinkle his Blood upon your Door-post. O what a mercy would it be to have the token of pacification and atonement fixed upon your Doors, then we shall be safely protected in times of divine wrath, therefore we read *Isa* 26. 19. *Enter into the Chambers and shut the Doors, till the Indignation be over past*; what a mercy would it be to have the destroying Angel pass over you, when some of your Neighbours shall be smitten with the wrath of God?

Eighth and last Motive,

To open unto Christ: For consider by his coming into you, your poor Souls will be dispossessed of the strong man armed: beloved, there is never a poor Soul out of Jesus Christ, but is really possessed by Satan in a spiritual sense, therefore we read of the spirit working in the Children of Disobedience.

Now the letting in of Christ would be the ejection

ejection of Satan, when a ſtrong man armed keepeth his place, his goods are in peace, but when a ſtronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he taketh from him his Armour, wherein he truſted, and divideth, the Spoils, *Luk.* 11. 21, 22. *Matt.* 12. 29. the ſtrong man is Satan armed with all his ſubtilty, to keep our Chriſt, the Palace or Houſe, is the heart of a poor Creature, before Chriſt enter in upon it, his goods are in peace, (*viz.*) all is quiet and ſtill and at reſt, in the Soul, but now a ſtronger than he enters, that is Jeſus Chriſt, he comes and takes poſſeſſion of the Soul and turns out Satan O what a mercy will this be for Satan, to be caſt out and Chriſt to come in? but I have done with the Motives. And methinks I hear ſome poor ſoul ſay I cannot tell what hinders opening to Chriſt, I deſire to open unto him, but alas I find I do not open to him, he is but at the Door yet, and he was there ſeveral years ago. Now what are the lets, and barrs that keep him out? before you have the helps to let him in, it is convenient you ſhould know the Hindrances, that keep him out, and that I may convince you, conſider,

1. That which keeps Chriſt at the Door, is ſelf-confidence, and conceitedneſs of our good Eſtate, this was the hindrance to Chriſt, coming in to thoſe poor *Laodiceans*: they were rich in their own opinions, ſuch were

the Pharisees, whole souls, and so looked not after a Physician; now Christ hath nothing to do with such souls, *he came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

2. That which keeps Christ out is resting in a formal *Laodicean* Profession, and thus they deceive themselves. They think they have let him into their hearts, when they let him in by Profession into their Lives: it was a complaint of a Father, how many kiss Christ, but few love Christ, your Profession is but a kiss a meer Complement, if you do not let him take possession of your Souls: *It is not every one that says Lord, Lord, can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matt.*7.23. 24,25.

3. That which keeps Christ out of the Soul is persons ignorance of their need of Christ: O what opening to Christ would there be, and what running after him? what crying out *come in thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without?* O then thy soul will cry out; none but Christ, none but Christ.

4th. Hindrance which keeps Christ out, poor souls reserving some beloved Lust. Consider sinner, Christ and Sin are like *Sarah* and *Hagar*: they cannot dwell together; alas poor soul there is no room for Christ, thy heart is filled already.

5th. Hindrance that keeps Christ out of the Soul is, the pride of poor Souls. They are too proud,

proud to open to Christ: but remember sinner, Christ resists the proud a far off: *but with the humble he hath promised to dwell*, Gen. 4.5. but I must hasten to a Conclusion which shall be in a word of Direction,

To many poor Souls that are stirred, or prest in spirit, to open unto Christ: but they find it hard work, their hearts are so barr'd and troubled against the Lord Jesus, how (says such Souls) shall we be help'd to open unto him?

First Help to open to Christ: Sinner be sure to stir with the first motions and calls of the spirit of God to open. Poor Souls are snoring on their Beds of security, and are fast asleep: and Christ comes to them as he did to the Spouse, and says *open to me my Sister, &c.* but alas poor souls are not awakened.

Second Help to open to Christ is this get a true and unfeigned Love to him: we open to those we love. If we love Christ with all our heart, we should open our hearts to him more. We read of a sweet passage, when the Spouses heart was shut against him, what did Christ go away and leave her in her shut up condition? no it is true he did withdraw: but he first went to her, and dropt Myrrh upon the handles of the Lock, he put his hand at the hole of the Door, and what then? her Bowels were moved for him: she was now

affected,

affected, and afflicted with her unkindneſs, in not opening to Chriſt, and what did iſſue in? *I roſe to open to my beloved.*

Third direction to help to open to Chriſt: be ſure ſoul to take heed of calling Satan into Council with you, when you are under any Inclinations of heart to open to Chriſt: as ſoon as Chriſt comes to knock at a poor ſouls Door to get in, then Satan will be about the Door to keep Chriſt out. O therefore conſult not with him, he is a great Enemy to ſouls opening to Chriſt upon theſe Accounts. Firſt he knows he ſhall be turned out if Chriſt come in, when a ſtronger than he enters his houſe; O he is loath to be turned out of his Poſſeſſions, then he rages becauſe his time is ſhort. Secondly, He knows when Chriſt comes into the ſoul he will bring his train, this Glorious King hath a double train, firſt a train of Graces, Secondly, a train of Comforts, now Satan envies the Soul ſhould have any Grace, or any Comfort, he knows as grace comes in grace goes out. Thirdly, as Comfort comes in Corruption goes out, therefore we read *the fear of the Lord and the Comforts of the Holy Ghoſt goe together*, *Act* 9.3.11. and what is the meaning of Chriſts ſupping with the Soul, but his good cheer he brings in with him, his Feaſt of fat things, *viz. The Comforts of his Love*, *Cant.* 5. 1.

Fourth,

Fourth, and laſt Direction, would you open to Chriſt, then labour to get more experimental acquaintance with the Exerciſe of Faith: as you have heard Love to be one operating Grace, ſo is Faith another; Faith makes a diſcovery of Chriſt to the Soul as the only deſirable Object; Faith ſets love on work; Faith purifies the Soul from the filth of ſin as well as the guilt of ſin. I did intend to have ſhown you more of the Excellency of this Grace of Faith: but the time is too far ſpent the reſt I ſhall reſerve for another opportunity: the Lord give a Bleſſing to what hath been delivered in much weakneſs and raiſe it up with much ſtrength.

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